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Historically, man's educational system and preparation for a role in society has been based on a concept of stability. Our's is the first generation which must educate and reeducate to new dimensions of time and change. Today a person's role in society is determined almost exclusively by his work role. This concept leads to several conclusions: (1) Vocational education must become a part of all levels of education to assist individuals in the transition from school to work, (2) Educators must help students make this transition, and (3) Schools and colleges must make learning how to work a part of their program. Programs which give all persons the opportunity to serve a useful purpose must be developed. Ways to bridge the gap between man and his work are to establish exploratory occupational programs in junior high schools, a nationwide work-study program, and an entry-job placement system, and to construct residential vocational schools. Man's work must be recognized as his most important product and education must become the link between man and his work. (EM)

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THE SAMUEL LEONARD FICK LECTURE
ON INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

Education -- The Bridge Between Man and His Work.

By Grant Venn

(Presented at the TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, MARCH 14–17, 1967).

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SAMUEL LEONARD FICK

Eminent Industrial Education Leader

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Teacher and Department Head 1925–35 and 1937–38

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

Teacher Educator 1935–37 and 1938–41
Assistant Director, War Production Training, 1941–44
Chief, Bureau of Industrial Education, 1944–62

AMERICAN VOCATIONAL ASSOCIATION:

Holder of Annual Ship's Citation
Vice President for Trade and Industrial Education
Chairman, Trade and Industrial Policy and Planning Committee
President, National Association of State Supervisors of Trade and Industrial Education

CALIFORNIA INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION:

President of the California Industrial Education Association
Holder of the Annual Ship's Citation

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The Samuel Leonard Fick Lecture Was Originated By the Industrial EducationTeachers and Administrators of California

The Lecture Will Be Given Each Year in Connection with the Annual Conference on Industrial Education in California

Education—The Bridge Between Man and His Work

It is appropriate that a conference of industry and education leaders take place on Saint Patrick's Day. The Patron Saint of the Emerald Isle is not only credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland and driving the snakes out of that country but Gaelic legend has it that he was the first Christian architect-engineer.

Irish historians say that he was the first to draw floor plans for a building, which he marked out in the dirt for the Church of Armagh in the fifth century. Thus, the Apostle of the Celts could be considered the "father of industrial technology."

I feel honored to be among the distinguished list of Samuel Leonard Fick lecturers and I am happy that you have selected "Industrial Education — the Bridge Between Man and His Work" as the theme of your conference. It is not only a timely topic but one that I enjoy sinking my teeth into because I firmly believe that vocational education must successfully serve as the bridge between man and his work for nearly 80 percent of our population.

We know that only 20 percent of the youths who enter high school graduate from college. It is the remaining 80 percent that concerns us most, as vocational educators, and which provides an opportunity for each of us.

Historically, man has based his educational system and preparation for a role in society on a concept of stability. Changes which occurred took generations to evolve. But in the last two decades our civilization has changed rapidly and drastically. The application of science and technology to the agricultural, industrial, labor, business, and commercial institutions of our society

has created a revolution in our social, economic and educational institutions. Some of the symptoms that graphically illustrate these transformations are the manpower shortages in skilled and technical occupations, the high unemployment during peaks of prosperity, the difficulty youth experiences in breaking into the world of work—and the fact that by 1970 more than half our population will be under 25 years of age!

In addition, old values and traditions are being questioned, and many are being discarded; we have racial problems requiring prompt solutions and poverty pockets throughout the Nation which must be eliminated. What a challenge all this poses for educators and employers of the country! And what satisfaction we can gain if we meet this challenge!

Our adult population has long lived with the concept of stability and has grown up under this condition. But the present generation of young people does not know the meaning of stability; it is engulfed in a whirlpool of change. Therefore, we have become the first generation which must educate young people and re-educate adults to new dimensions of time and change. And because methods which solved problems 30 or 40 years ago help so little in solving problems today, experience seems almost a handicap. Change has created a new environment.

For example:

1. The majority of the labor force today is in service and distributive occupations, and the percentage of production workers continues to decline.

2. The average person will need to change his occupation four or five times during his life.

3. Preparation of individuals with simple, specific job skills no longer makes sense as a long-range policy.

4. Vocational educators must use new methods to train workers in the basic skills they will need to move into new areas.

In the past, occupational education was isolated from the main

stream of education. General studies and vocational studies were conceived as separate tracks leading to separate life goals—the former a highroad to liberal or professional higher education and the latter a path for students lacking either the means or the ability for higher education.

The rapid changes in our environment make it mandatory for vocational education to change not only some of its functions and aims, but its public image.

We vocational educators have become responsible for a pupil's education because someone else has failed. Although vocational education has undergone tremendous development, especially since the passage of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, its public image harkens back in large measure to the time when vocational education—then known as manual training and home economics—was used to school delinquents. Therefore, vocational education is stigmatized as an inferior form of instruction in the mind of the lay public. Although thousands of teachers are dedicated to vocational education and millions of students benefit from vocational education, our public image falls far short of what it could be and should be.

In order to improve this image we need to do more than just talk to each other. All of us who are involved in vocational education must cooperate in a nationwide public information program to get across the true story of occupational education. It is only in this way that vocational education will be able to obtain its share of the educational dollar needed for those 80 per cent of the students who do not complete college and seldom have adequate opportunities to learn the work skills they will need.

But at the same time we are improving our public image we must also improve our program. The fact that there are so many remedial programs supported by Federal funds is proof that our schools have not been asked to do the total job that is necessary today.

The present outcry for vocational education, which grows

louder by the year, arises from the growing fear that our educational system, especially in the large cities, may break down because of the public schools' inability to cope with the heterogeneous student input. There's another reason for the growing demand for vocational education: It is seen as a means of developing the higher skills needed in today's world.

I think it is incumbent on us *not* to accept the proposition that the proper role of vocational education is simply to be the caretaker of those who fail to make the grade in some more general system. Our role is a greater one! We must become part of the mainstream of education and, through our inputs, improve the entire process of education. This is the challenge we must meet if we are to become bridge builders to the world of work.

When this Nation was formed it was decided that each person must be educated not only for the sake of his personal development but also for the national welfare. Our Founding Fathers established the principle that the power to govern rests with the governed, and one who governs must be educated so that his decisions will be wise.

Today, a person's role in society is determined almost exclusively by his work role. Therefore, occupational education is a fundamental necessity for an individual's well-being, since a man who cannot work becomes a drag on society, economically, politically, and, most important of all, psychologically. So we arrive at the premise that occupational preparation must now become a fundamental component of each person's educational heritage.

This concept leads to several conclusions: (1) vocational education must become a part of every level of education to assist the individual in making the transition from school to work, (2) educators must assume responsibility for helping students make this transition, (3) schools and colleges must make learning *how* to work a part of their program by providing students actual work opportunities in cooperation with business, industry,

and public employers. We have long recognized the need of a professional education for doctors, lawyers, engineers, and ministers. We must now recognize the need of an occupational education for every individual. To do less than this will cost this Nation huge outlays in remedial and corrective programs to correct this error.

Segments of our society are being locked out of work because of technical changes. Even though the overall unemployment rate is now less than 4 percent, for youths between the ages of 16 and 22 it is 18 percent, and for Negroes in that age group it is twice as high.

The isolation of adolescents and other groups from the total economic and cultural pattern of society is our number one problem. There was a time when a youngster raised on a farm was an economic asset to the family. Today the family-sized farm is vanishing.

The changed nature of work has virtually barred our young people from a realistic role in the world of work. In effect, they have no opportunity to contribute. However, every individual should be able to recognize worth and dignity in himself. Education has little meaning or reality for thousands of young people who have no such present conviction and who cannot defer to a future role in society because they lack aspiration, background, environment, or proper ties with their family, their community, or their country. Programs must be developed which give every person the opportunity to serve a useful purpose.

In the past, the education of the majority of people did not have a vital relationship to their work and did not need to have such a relationship. Today, the education of people must have a vital relationship to their work as has been true in the professions for many years. In fact, education must become the bridge between each person and the world of work in all its modern complexity for each person.

In the early application of technology in our society the need

was for a comparatively few people vocationally prepared as managers, clerks and engineers—and for a great mass of workers to provide the muscle power and the low level operative skills. The work force took the shape of a very flat triangle.

The educational system provided these necessary skills. This was the picture until 1940–45. Today manpower requirements of an increasing technological society are in the shape of a tall vase, which tapers below the top to indicate the need for administrators, researchers, planners, scientists, engineers, sales personnel, technicians, programmers, teachers and the many others who use mainly cognitive skills. The vase draws in sharply at the bottom to show the decreasing demand for those who can qualify for muscular and repetitive tasks that daily are being replaced by machines.

To meet today's manpower requirements and to help everyone become a contributor to our society, our educational system must perform several functions—some of them new. They grow out of the following assumptions:

1. *Education is a link between man and society.* Since we will not all have the same role and it will be changing, we need a variety of educational approaches based on the variety of individuals in our society. This will require both the means of change continually and the skills needed to enter into society as a contributor.

2. *Our educational system must change.* Its emphasis must be altered from a "selecting out" responsibility to an "including in" responsibility.

3. *Public education must be the main integrating institution in our Nation.* There is no other agency in our society which serves all the people and which has the opportunity to start serving each person at such an early age and continue to serve him throughout his life.

4. *Education and development of the human resource is less*

costly than correction and remediation. While those who have "lost out" in the last two decades cannot be expendable, nevertheless an earlier investment would not only be cheaper but would be politically acceptable. Most people prefer to be part of a successful pattern rather than selected for special treatment.

5. *Education is seen as a way for many but not for all.* The schools must become the "best place" for each child and adult in want of success—today, not in the near future.

6. *Public schools and colleges have the resources.* Our public schools, colleges, and universities have the greatest resources, facilities, and public acceptance to do the job.

7. *Too many corrective programs blatantly fault the public educational system.* Since efforts to date have caused a greater growth in frustration than they have in results, we would do better to build on an established belief in an accepted institution —the educational institution of the Nation.

8. *The need for continuing education.* Continuing education becomes equal in importance to primary and secondary education as a function of the schools.

9. *Adult, vocational, and continuing education are the least structured part of our educational system.* With less structure greater changes can be proposed and more innovative programs developed with less resistance.

There are a number of things that can be done in occupational education to construct a more solid bridge between man and his work. However, as a starting point, I would like to suggest just four:

First, the establishment of exploratory occupational programs in junior high schools. These programs could be developed as part of the industrial and home economics subjects which most children take while they are in junior high school. The idea would be to provide youngsters with all kinds of information on possibilities for future education and to broaden their occupational horizons and concepts about work. At this age students

could be introduced to the many varieties of jobs that are available to them, what they pay, and what future they hold. There would be no attempt to force a vocational choice; the aim would be to provide for children a bridge from junior high school to high school vocational programs, college preparatory programs, or general programs.

Second, a nationwide work-study program that would give many young still in school an opportunity for work experience. Few youngsters, it appears, have the chance to obtain work experience in today's world. At the same time it is obvious that much work needs to be done. Students could begin in much the same kind of programs as those offered in the Neighborhood Youth Corps—with the exception that related studies would be tied to the work experience which, in turn, would become a regular part of the school program.

Schools should recognize the value of developing good work attitudes and habits, which will stand their students in good stead in the future. And, they should give credit for work experience. It should become a part of the student's high school record, recognized in the same manner that work experience at the college level is recognized by business and industry.

Third, the establishment of an entry job placement system. A system of demonstration programs might be the best means of getting job placement accepted as part of the educational system. For instance, a school in each of the 50 States and territories might be selected as an "opportunity school" with a placement office and full time placement officer. The placement office in cooperation with other agencies should survey job opportunities in the area, arrange interviews for students with prospective employers, and obtain jobs for its graduates.

Just as college-bound students in high school are told "if you do well enough in school we will get you into college," the job placement center would say, "if you do your best in school we will get you a job."

To carry out its purpose, the placement center would need to maintain close relationships with all employers in the community who, in turn, would pledge themselves to cooperate with the school by employing its students part-time in work experience programs and full-time after graduation. Equally important would be to seek close working relationships with the State employment service, organized labor and business in the community, who also could help students get entry level jobs.

My personal experience in this field indicates that both employers and labor people are anxious to cooperate. An important consideration in carrying out this program would be the attempt to match the entry job to the potential of the student. The school is the institution that has the most information on the student and is, therefore, in the best position to do the matching.

Fourth, construction of residential vocational schools. This idea, of course, is not new. Residential schools have been authorized under the Vocational Education Act of 1963 although funds for their construction have not been appropriated to date. But the concept of the residential school that I am suggesting is one geared primarily to the hard-core disadvantaged who would be given the opportunity to enroll at an early age—earlier than the minimum age level set for programs sponsored by the Office of Economic Opportunity at Job Centers or the Manpower Development and Training Act.

In the urban and large metropolitan centers, children as young as 12 or 14 years of age could be enrolled in residential schools and taught general education skills as well as preparatory vocational skills. They could thus be helped before they become hardened in attitude and habit and inflexible in their approach to their own problems.

If we accept the concept that flexibility and continued learning are going to be needed by every citizen in the future, then it is essential that we not only get our young people into our public educational system but that we keep them there. Only in this

way can they become effective throughout their adult lives. And, only in this way, can we make education the bridge between man and his work.

In closing, may I hope, with you, that we become as successful as St. Patrick was in eliminating snakes—may we eliminate the misunderstanding that education is good for some but not all. We must recognize that man's work is his most important product. Education must truly become the link between man and his work—for everyone.

SAMUEL LEONARD FICK LECTURES

1961	*The Industrial Education Image*	Howard A. Campion
1962	*Industrial Education Contributes to American Values*	C. C. Trillingham
1963	*Perspectives on Industrial Education*	Benjamin C. Willis
1964	*A Ladder to the Moon*	Frank B. Lindsay
1965	*QUO VADIS: New Challenges in Tomorrow's Society*	Arthur F. Corey
1966	*An Effective Vocational Education Program in a Changing Society*	Neil V. Sullivan

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